

SAN JUAN COUNTY (UTAH). COUNTY RECORDER [904]

MINING RECORDS, 1891-1914.

6 microfilm reels

DESCRIPTION: San Juan County mining record books document the boom and bust of wealth-seekers searching for gold in the late nineteenth century and then for oil in the early twentieth century. While these books contain a variety of mining records, they are dominated by notices of location along the banks of the Colorado and San Juan Rivers. Federal mining law enacted in 1872 provided that valuable mineral deposits in the public domain were free and open to exploration and that the locators of the same were to have exclusive right of possession as long as they complied with federal and local law (*Statutes at Large, Treaties, and Proclamations, of the United States of America*, vol. XVII, chap. 152, also *Revised Statutes of the United States*, chap. 6, title 32). The first step toward ownership of mineral deposits was the discovery of a potentially productive site and recording the claim or notice of location. Each notice affirms that the locator has complied with federal and local mining laws. Each notice names the claim and provides a description of it, and each notice provides the names of locators.

Early San Juan books (Book A and B) contain numerous location notices for gold prospectors, many of them located by agents for individuals or corporations in distant cities. From 1898 to 1901 the Hoskaninni Company dredged the Colorado River in search of gold. Hoskaninni claims fill almost all of Book C and much of Book B (a complete list of that company's claims in San Juan, Kane, and Coconino (AZ) counties begins in Book C p. 320). Petroleum claims began to be recorded in significant numbers in January 1903 (Book E) and dominate the rest of the series. In many cases the recorder specified whether the claimant intended to work the ground for gold and other precious minerals, or whether the claim was located on a valuable bed or deposit of petroleum. Most location notices in books G and H are placer notices for petroleum in the Monumental and Gabel Mining Districts.

In addition to notices of location, San Juan County mining record books include other mining documents. The San Juan County recorder used these books to record affidavits showing proof of labor. In order to patent a claim, the law required claimants to do development work, and Utah law required locators to file an affidavit in the county recorder's office upon completion of this work (*Utah Code Annotated*, 1953, 40-1-6). Each affidavit stated that \$100 worth of labor had been completed on a specific claim and itemized what that labor entailed. San Juan County mining books contain a few agreements related to mining, a few mineral certificates or patents, many amendments to notices of location, some surveys of mining claims, and also a few notices of discovery in Books H and J. In this case the claimant announces that he has indeed discovered oil on a claim. San Juan mining records contain a number of notices of publication provided as proof that a part owner has published notice that if his partner does not do his share of assessment labor, he forfeits ownership of his share of the claim.

San Juan County mining record books include location notices or other documents from the following mining districts: Bluff, Blue Mountain, Gabel, Big Indian, Gardner, Monumental, Ida, San Juan, LaSal, White Canyon, Gold Strike, Sand Island, Johnson Creek, Williams, Navajo Mountain, and Moonlight Springs. Book G includes the revised rules and regulations for the Monumental District beginning on page 633.

ARRANGEMENT: The records in these books are arranged chronologically as recorded.

RESEARCH NOTE: In addition to mining records, later books (especially Books F, G and J) are laced with other documents. Of particular note, the recorder used these books to record by-laws for the Monticello Cattle Association (Book F, p. 457), the Stevens Land and Livestock Company (Book F, p. 430), the Paradox Valley Irrigation Company (Book H, p.44) and the Elk Mountain Stock Growers Association (Book H, p. 83). The books contain a number of deeds and homestead or desert land certificates. Desert land notices state that a certain individual intends to claim specific land under the Desert Lands Act once it has been surveyed. Book J contains very many deeds. In fact, the deeds recorded here fill a gap in the San Juan County recorder's deed books.

RELATED RECORDS: The records in these books are indexed by name of claim in MINING RECORDS INDEX (LOCATIONS), series 23583. The San Juan County recorder entered additional notices of location or other mining records in other sets of record books. These include MISCELLANEOUS RECORDS, series 23400; DEED RECORDS, series 23399; MINING LOCATION NOTICES (PETROLEUM), series 24000; and MINING LOCATION NOTICES (LODE CLAIMS), series 24001. Before 1897 several mining district recorders kept mining records in San Juan County. These include the Williams District MINING LOCATION NOTICES, series 24040; the Blue Mountain District MINING RECORDS, series 24035; the Gabel District MINING LOCATION NOTICES, series 24039; and the Monumental District MINING LOCATION NOTICES, series 24041.

PROCESSING NOTE: San Juan County mining record books were microfilmed by San Juan County in February and March 2001 and processed by Rosemary Cundiff in January 2002.

PREFERRED CITATION: Cite the Utah State Archives and Records Service, the creating agency name, the series title, and the series number.

CONTAINER LIST

Reel	Description
1	Jan 1891-May 1894 (Mining Claims Miscellaneous Book A)
2	May 1894-May 1898 (Mining Claims Locations Book B)
3	Jun 1898-Dec 1901 (Mining Claims Book C)
4	Dec 1901-Jan 1905 (Mining Claims E)
4	Mar 1905-Aug 1908 (Mining Claims F)
5	Aug 1908-Apr 1909 (Recorder's Office Book G)
5	Jan 1909-Dec 1911 (Mining Records Book H)
6	Sep 1910-Jan 1914 (Mining Records Book J)